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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/631,921

07/31/2003

Jigish D. Trivedi

MICRON.104DVI

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03/10/2005

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EXAMINER

POMPEY, RON EVERETT

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2812

DATE MAILED: 03/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/631,921	Applicant(s) TRIVEDI, JIGISH D.	
	Examiner Ron E. Pompey	Art Unit 2812	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 05 July 2005.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-18 and 20-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-12, 14-18 and 20-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-12, 14-18 and 20-28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okumura (US 4,935,380) in further view of the admitted prior art (APA) and Yoo (US 5,605,854).

Okumura discloses the limitations of:

forming a gate stack on a substrate, the gate stack having at least one conductive layer, of tungsten silicide, (205, fig. 7B) and a source layer of polysilicon (213, fig. 7B) positioned on top of the at least one conductive layer and at an uppermost surface of the gate stack, the source layer providing a source of transforming atoms (col. 6, ln. 59 – col. 7, ln. 9).

3. Okumura fails to disclose the limitations of:

exhuming a first layer of the gate stack so as to expose a portion of the source layer above at least a portion of the gate stack so as to define a first circuit node, comprises removing a portion of a cap insulating layer;

depositing a refractory material, of titanium so that the refractory material contacts the exposed uppermost portion of the source layer of the gate stack and so

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that the refractory material is also positioned to contact a second circuit node of the integrated circuit having a rich source of the transforming atoms;

forming a masking layer over the refractory material;

etching the masking layer so as to define an extent of the local interconnect;

selectively transforming the refractory material underneath the etched masking layer including at the exposed portion of the source layer and the second circuit node into low resistance contacts wherein the source layer provides transforming atoms to the portion of the refractory material positioned adjacent the exposed uppermost portion of the source layer and the second circuit node;

performing a selective removal process, which comprises etching the exposed refractory material after annealing the refractory material with etchant (wet) which is selective for nitrides and substantially less reactive with silicides, wherein portions of the refractory material beyond the masking layer are preferentially removed and wherein the transformed refractory material underneath the masking layer is preferentially unresponsive to the selective removal process;

wherein annealing the refractory material comprises exposing the refractory material to a rapid thermal processing environment having an N₂/NH₃ ambient so as to increase the temperature of the refractory material to a value between 600 degrees Celsius and 750 degrees Celsius for a period of time between 10 seconds and 60 seconds;

wherein the source layer provides the transforming atoms to the refractory material during transformation of the refractory material such that the selective removal

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process reduces undercutting of the low resistance contact at the exposed surface of the source layer;

wherein the transforming of the refractory material comprises transforming the refractory material adjacent the source layer into a silicide contact and wherein the transforming atoms of the source layer comprise silicon atoms to transform the refractory material adjacent the source layer into the low resistance contact.

a. However, the admitted prior art (APA) discloses:

exhuming (202, fig. 1) a first layer (216, fig. 1) of the gate stack so as to expose uppermost surface of the gate stack so as to define a first circuit node;

depositing a refractory material, of titanium, (218, fig. 1) on the integrated circuit so that the refractory material contacts the exposed portion of the uppermost layer of the gate stack and so that the refractory material is positioned on second circuit node (206, fig. 1) of the integrated circuit having a rich source of transforming atoms; and

forming a masking layer (220, fig. 1) over the refractory material;

etching the masking layer so as to define an extent of the local interconnect;

selectively transforming the refractory material underneath the etched masking layer including at the exposed portion of the uppermost surface of the gate stack into a low resistance contact wherein the source layer provides transforming atoms to the portion of the refractory material positioned adjacent the exposed portion of the uppermost surface of the gate stack and the second circuit node;

performing a selective removal process, which comprises etching the exposed refractory material after annealing the refractory material with etchant (wet) which is

selective for nitrides and substantially less reactive with silicides, wherein portions of the refractory material beyond the masking layer are preferentially removed and wherein the transformed refractory material underneath the masking layer is preferentially unresponsive to the selective removal process;

wherein the source layer provides the transforming atoms to the refractory material during transformation of the refractory material such that the selective removal process reduces undercutting of the low resistance contact at the exposed surface of the source layer;

wherein the transforming of the refractory material comprises transforming the refractory material adjacent the source layer into a silicide contact and wherein the transforming atoms of the source layer comprise silicon atoms to transform the refractory material adjacent the source layer into the low resistance contact. (pg. 1, ln. 28 – pg. 3, ln. 3).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine the admitted prior art with Okumura, because the uppermost layer of the gate stack, in Okumura (213, fig. 7B), protects the gate structure from subsequent process and the refractory material/silicide formed by the titanium, in APA, and the silicon uppermost layer of the gate stack, in Okumura, provides an electrical connection between circuit nodes in an integrated circuit.

b. However, Yoo discloses:

wherein annealing the refractory material comprises exposing the refractory material to a rapid thermal processing environment having an N₂/NH₃ ambient so as to

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increase the temperature of the refractory material to a value between 600 degrees Celsius and 750 degrees Celsius for a period of time between 10 seconds and 60 seconds (col. 4, Ins. 43-67).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to combine Yoo with Okumura and the admitted prior art, because rapid thermal processing has less effect on the doping concentrations set in the previous process due to less prolonged heat treatment.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments filed 7-05-05, pertaining to claims 1-12, 14-18 and 20-28, have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues the wrong figures 10a-10h and 11a-11f, instead of figure 7a-7e. In figures 7a-7e, which are the figures pointed to in the rejection, the uppermost layer of the gate stack is a polysilicon layer 213. Therefore it reads on the newly amended claims.

The applicant also makes remarks that the APA exhumes the upper surface of the tungsten silicide layer 210 and that the silicide would be a poor source of silicon when forming the titanium silicide to contact the node region. However, with the gate stack in figure 7B of Okumura, there would be a silicon rich source layer 213 that would produce a good production of titanium silicide at the contact node region.

Conclusion

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

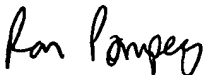
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ron E. Pompey whose telephone number is (571) 272-1680. The examiner can normally be reached on compressed.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael S. Lebentritt can be reached on (571) 272-1873. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Ron Pompey
AU:2812
October 12, 2005



MICHAEL LEBENTRITT
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER